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ABSTRACT

Throughout history, in all parts of the world, people have struggled with the problem of loss. Moving words have been written and beautiful objects created to preserve the memory of people and their achievements. This theme issue explores the different ways that people have been praised and remembered in works of art. An introduction suggests a variety of memorial types and discusses aspects of durability and selectivity. Four memorials are presented: (1) "A Memorial to a King: Head of an Oba"; (2) "A Memorial to a Soldier: 'Painting No 47, Berlin'" (Marsden Hartley); (3) "A Memorial to an Athlete: 'Ritual Road Serving Vessel'" (Jing Gui); and (4) "A Memorial to a Family Member: 'Adams Memorial'" (Augustus Saint-Gaudens). A lesson plan section gives suggested activities that correlate with the memorials described. A student worksheet and take home page in English and Spanish are given. The issue concludes with a list of resources. (MM)

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SO-AR

ART to ZOO

TEACHING WITH THE POWER OF OBJECTS

Smithsonian Institution
January/February 1995

Inside

Lesson Plan

Take-Home Page in English/Spanish

Subjects

Art

Language Arts

Social Studies

Grades

4-8

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Memorials: Art for Remembering

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Art to Zoo's purpose is to help teachers bring into their classrooms the educational power of museums and other community resources.

Art to Zoo draws on the Smithsonian's hundreds of exhibitions and programs — from art, history, and science to aviation and folklife — to create classroom-ready materials for grades four through eight.

Each of the four annual issues explores a single topic through an interdisciplinary, multicultural approach.

The Smithsonian invites teachers to duplicate *Art to Zoo* materials for educational use.

MEMORIALS:
Art for Remembering

Losing something like a bike or a watch is hard, especially if we never get it back again. Losing a friend or a grandparent or a pet is even harder. Sometimes we lose people because we have to move far away from them. We fear they will forget us or that we will never see them again. Sometimes a friend or a pet or a family member dies, and that is the hardest loss of all.

When people slip out of our lives, we try as hard as we can to remember everything about them. We listen to their favorite songs or eat special foods that they liked to cook. We revisit a place where we had once been together or carry on a ritual that we had both enjoyed. As long as we keep people in our memory, we have not lost them completely. As time passes, however, we know that even the most precious memories fade.

Throughout history, in all parts of the world, people have struggled with the problem of loss. Many moving words have been written and many beautiful objects have been created to preserve the memory of people who are gone and to keep a record of their achievements. As one of Shakespeare's characters pointed out, "Praising what is lost makes the remembrance dear."* This issue of *Art to Zoo* explores the different ways that people have been praised and remembered in works of art.

* *All's Well That Ends Well*, V, iii, 19

MEMORIALS:
Art for Remembering

TYPES OF MEMORIALS

A memorial can be as fleeting as a concert in someone's honor, or as long-lasting as a bronze plaque attached to a strong wall. A memorial can be as private as a tree planted in a garden or as public as a donation of fine drawings given to a museum in memory of a friend.

The most common way to hold someone in our memory, however, is to try to preserve some aspect of the actual, physical person. We take photos and preserve the person on paper. We record the voice on tape. We make a video so that we can always see the person moving about on film. We write poems or essays or books to try to reconstruct the person in words. We make paintings and drawings and sculptures to try to give the body form again.

DURABILITY

If a memorial is created to keep a memory alive, the memorial itself must be durable. For that reason, bronze has always been a favorite medium. Bronze can be battered without breaking. It can survive strong sunlight, rain, snow, heat, and cold. It cannot be ripped or cut. It is hard to scratch or dent. Three of the four memorials discussed in this *Art to Zoo*, representing three different continents and stretching across thirty centuries, are made of bronze.

SELECTIVITY

A memorial cannot evoke everything about a person. At best, its maker has narrowed its focus to the most telling aspect of the person, in hopes that he or she will somehow live on in the bronze or stone, in the paint on a canvas, the words on a paper, or the musical tones issuing from an orchestra. The artists who made the works of art in this *Art to Zoo* have created images of four very different people. The details the artists chose to emphasize determine how these four people will be remembered:

A memorial to a ***King****, emphasizing symbols of royalty and power*

A memorial to a ***Soldier****, emphasizing the splendor of the uniform*

A memorial that an ***Athlete*** *has had made to commemorate his own achievement in archery*

A memorial to a ***Family Member****, emphasizing the mystery of death and the sorrow of loss*

A MEMORIAL TO A KING:
Head of an Oba

"Oba" means "king" to the people of Benin, a kingdom in the part of Africa we now call Nigeria.

Since the year 1300, thirty-eight obas have ruled the kingdom of Benin. When an oba died, his son became the new oba and immediately commissioned a bronze head cast in honor of his deceased father. This bronze "commemorative head" was placed on an altar in the royal palace, ensuring that the god-like authority of the old oba would be transmitted to the new oba and that his spirit would bring good health and prosperity to the people of Benin.

Obas look like human beings, but they do not show individual details. Physical likeness was not important. The crucial idea was to display the proper symbols of royalty.

Coral beads were the most important sign of royalty in the kingdom of Benin because the people of Benin believed that anyone who wore coral spoke with divine authority. In *Head of an Oba*, coral beads are represented in the high collar around the oba's neck, the netted cap, and the strands of beads on each side of his face. Coral, which was brought into Benin by foreign traders, was an exceedingly precious commodity. The oba had a monopoly on all coral and displayed more coral beads in his attire than anyone else in his kingdom. Other members of the royal court wore coral only with the oba's permission.

Like coral, copper alloys reflect a red color that was considered beautiful by the Benin people. These alloys, such as bronze or brass, are strong and permanent—the ideal material for symbolizing the never-ending authority of the long dynasty of obas. Only the oba and the oba's mother were entitled to have these metal heads placed on their altars after they had died.

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A MEMORIAL TO A SOLDIER:
Painting No. 47, Berlin
by Marsden Hartley

Marsden Hartley was an American painter living in Berlin between 1914 and 1915 who befriended a young German who served as a soldier during World War I. After the soldier was killed in action, Hartley painted this portrait in his memory. Hartley was dazzled by the splendor of the German military and chose to remember his friend in uniform. In fact, he depicts his friend *as* a uniform.

Hartley made the insignia on the uniform into an epitaph for the soldier. The "K.v.F." on the pocket tells us that the soldier's name was Karl von Freyburg. The "24" on the vertical band tells us that he was twenty-four years old when he was killed in action. The "4" reminds us that he was a member of the 4th Regiment, and the black cross tells us that he was given the Iron Cross award on the day before his death. The black and white checkerboard pattern in the background tells us that he loved to play chess.

During the time when Hartley met Karl von Freyburg, his imagination was stirred by daily parades of soldiers and horsemen, outfitted in elaborate uniforms. "I am seeing eight-pointed stars here by the thousands," he said, "on the helmets of the thousands of soldiers." He was especially impressed by the feathered helmet of the Kaiser's Royal Guards.

Hartley's use of brilliant reds, yellows, blues, and greens in this memorial portrait tells us as much about his own delight with the pageantry of the military as about the life of his fallen friend. While he was stunned by his friend's death and deeply mourned his loss, he continued to be moved by the spectacle of war. The splashy colors of the uniform are superimposed on the blackest of backgrounds that evokes a somber mood of remembrance.

A MEMORIAL TO AN ATHLETE:
Ritual Food Serving Vessel
(Jing Gui)

Victors in athletic competition are often awarded silver bowls inscribed with words of praise to keep their moment of glory alive. The *Jing gui* (pronounced "gway") is a bronze bowl made about three thousand years ago in China for the same purpose. It honors the achievement of a young man who excelled at archery. The inscription inside the bowl tells us about a royal officer named Jing who taught archery to the nobility, the officials, and the attendants of the King. After an archery contest in which he was victorious, the King saw fit to honor Jing for his success by presenting him with an archer's armguard. Jing was so proud to be honored by the King that he ordered the casting of a bronze bowl to preserve his moment of glory forever. He dedicated the memorial bowl to his mother. The inscription states that he hoped that "sons and grandsons (would) use it for ten thousand years." The *gui* was found at a burial site.

Thirty centuries later, Jing's *gui* still speaks for him. The fact that it is made of bronze tells us that Jing had considerable wealth, because in China bronze was available only to the ruling classes and was considered more precious than gold. The *gui* also tells us that Jing was a man of good taste. He had the bowl decorated with stylized images of birds with long tails, as was the fashion, and inscribed with the story of his exceptional accomplishments.

The inscription, which appears on the cover of this *Art to Zoo*, consists of ninety ancient Chinese "characters." These characters are unlike the letters that produce English words. Each character represents an entire object or idea. It is possible to identify the character for "archery" (a bow and arrow) three times in the inscription (hint: the character appears on the fifth, sixth, and eighth rows from the top).

A MEMORIAL TO A FAMILY MEMBER:
Adams Memorial
by Augustus Saint-Gaudens

When a person's life comes to an end, a grave marker in a cemetery is a common form of memorial. Some grave markers are simple and some are elaborate, but most do not linger in one's memory very long. The *Adams Memorial* is different.

The *Adams Memorial* in the National Museum of American Art is a casting of a bronze sculpture that stands in Rock Creek Church Cemetery in Washington, D.C. It is an image of a mysterious figure, seated on a rock, wearing a cloak that falls in heavy folds. The face, in deep shadow under a hood, seems beyond our reach. This is a solid, tangible presence, but not entirely of this world.

The other memorials described in this issue of *Art to Zoo* focus on the regalia, the uniform, and the athletic skills that distinguished the person in this life. The *Adams Memorial*, however, presents a figure who has already passed into a world of silence. The figure has no name, nor dates of birth or death. No message is inscribed, and the figure betrays no emotion.

The grave over which the figure sits is the grave of Clover Adams, the wife of Henry Adams, a prominent historian, philosopher, and direct descendant of two U.S. presidents. It is said that Adams never spoke his wife's name after her death, which was a suicide. He did, however, commission the sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens to create a figure for her grave. Mrs. Adams was a photographer, writer, and socialite, a woman who was "small and sharp and funny and by no means a goddess."[1] This figure bears no outward resemblance to her.

The hooded figure does, however, reveal something about the sculptor and his own views of life and death. Once when Saint-Gaudens was a boy he climbed a hill in front of the house where he had been staying. He later said, " Going to that hill was a thing looked forward to for days, and its climbing one afternoon, to find that there were hills still farther away, was my first feeling of the ever-mysterious beyond."[2] It is this sense of mystery that emanates from the *Adams Memorial*.

The *Adams Memorial* has had an impact on countless people. Eleanor Roosevelt found that a visit to this monument strengthened and renewed her spirit. Mark Twain thought, "All human grief is shown in this sad figure." English novelist John Galsworthy described its strength in *The Forsyte Saga*. His character, Soames Forsyte, speaks of a trip to America and a visit to the cemetery. He feels at home with the memorial and likes it better than "all the water he had seen at Niagara, and those skyscrapers in New York."[3]

Quotations noted on this page are from *Uncommon Clay*, (1) p. 228, (2) p. 10, (3) p. 240.

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LESSON PLAN

STEP 1 "WHOM DO YOU REMEMBER?" WORKSHEET

Objectives

- Identify a person or a pet who is no longer part of your life.
- Visualize the person or pet and draw a picture.
- Make notes about the person or pet.

Materials

- Copies of "Whom Do You Remember?" worksheet, page 12.

Subjects

- Language arts, art

Procedure

1. Ask each student to think of a relative, friend, or pet who used to be a significant part of their life. As a class, make a list of the reasons these people or pets are no longer nearby (e.g. moving away, going to a different school, getting new owners, or dying). Discuss why we like to have some way of remembering the people and pets from our past.

2. Give each student a copy of the "Whom Do You Remember?" worksheet. Ask each student to write down the name of the person or pet they would most like to remember and then to visualize him or her as clearly as possible in their mind.

3. As students fill out their worksheets, prod their memories by asking questions such as, How long was your person's hair? What color was it? Did your person stand up straight or bend over? Did the person like to get dressed up or did he/she prefer to wear everyday clothes? Did he/she like to play games, cook, work in the garden, play an instrument, watch TV, read the newspaper, play a sport, polish a car, clean the house, exercise, go fishing, sit on the porch, take a nap, play video games, go shopping, eat ice cream? Encourage the students to remember as many specifics about their person as possible.

Students who are remembering a pet could also think about the pet's appearance, favorite foods, games, sleeping places, and tricks.

4. Ask students to draw a picture of the people or pets they like to remember, just as they see them in their minds.

STEP 2 MEMORIALS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Objectives

- Establish that memorials can take a *variety* of forms.
- Identify memorials of different types in your school and community.
- Identify which of the memorials are permanent.

Materials

- Paper and pencils or markers.
- Cameras and film (optional).

Subjects

- Social studies

Procedure

1. Search your school for memorials. If your school is named after a person, find out what he/she did to deserve the honor. If there are paintings or sculptures of people in the front hall, find out whom they represent. Ask your school librarian if any books were given in someone's memory. (Bookplates inside the front cover should tell you.) Ask your principal if any trees or flower beds around your school were planted as a memorial to a former student or teacher.

2. Encourage students to visit important town buildings such as the library, the court house, and the city hall, either by themselves or with a parent. Ask whether any of the buildings or meeting rooms are dedicated to the memory of a local citizen. Visit the hospital and ask whether any pieces of sophisticated equipment were donated in memory of a

beloved doctor or patient. Visit public parks and look to see if any of the trees, flower beds, or playgrounds were dedicated to the memory of a city benefactor. Look for statues in honor of war veterans. Visit a museum and ask whether any works of art were given by a local collector in memory of a friend or family member.

3. Look at the signs that identify the highways, bridges, and stadiums in your community. Which of them bear the names of people? Find out who these people were and why enormous structures were built in their honor.

4. Look in the newspaper for notices of memorial scholarships, memorial concerts, memorial lectures, and memorial funds. Find out in whose honor these memorials were established.

5. Encourage students with cameras to take photos of as many memorials as they can find. Students who prefer to sketch could produce drawings instead. Have the students note the location of each memorial. Set up a bulletin board in your classroom showing the different types of memorials that have been found in your community.

STEP 3
MEMORIALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Objectives

- Introduce students to the *Head of an Oba; Painting No. 47, Berlin; Ritual Food Serving Vessel (Jing gui);* and *Adams Memorial.*
- Determine how each art work, in its own way, succeeds in praising and honoring its subject.

Subjects

- Social studies, art

A. HEAD OF AN OBA

Materials

- Assortment of children's picture books or illustrated children's dictionaries with pictures of kings.
- History books with portraits of European kings.
- News photo of the president of the United States making a speech from a podium decorated with the presidential shield.

Procedure

1. Use the information on pages 4 and 5 to identify the signs of royalty on the *Head of an Oba*. Be sure to point out the beaded high collar, the beaded net cap, the strands of beads on each side of the face, and the significant bead in the middle of the forehead.

2. Ask the students to look at illustrations of kings in children's picture books or European history books. Make a list of objects such as crowns, scepters, and robes that are familiar signs of royalty in European countries. Make a list of materials (ermine, gold, precious jewels, velvet, satin) that we associate with European kings.

3. Discuss the appearance of a president of the United States making a television speech to the people of the country. Does he wear any special clothing that identifies him as a leader? Is there anything on the television screen that tells us that he is the president? Discuss why a democratic form of government would not encourage a president to distinguish himself with unusual or extravagant clothing.

B. PAINTING NO. 47, BERLIN

Materials

- Library books showing military uniforms from many countries.

Procedure

1. Explain that *Painting No. 47, Berlin* was painted in memory of a young soldier. Ask the students to study the painting of the soldier's uniform, taking special note of the shapes, letters, numbers, and other insignia. Ask students to draw the designs that allude to the following facts about the soldier:

His name was Karl von Freyburg.

He was 24 when he was killed in war.

He was in the 4th Regiment.

He was awarded the Iron Cross.

He loved to play chess.

2. Discuss how this painting differs from a traditional portrait. Find out how many students think a "bodyless" portrait is still a portrait.

3. Use library books to find out what military uniforms from many different countries have in common. Do all use stars? Stripes? Crosses? Plumes? Epaulets? What do these military uniforms have in common with school band uniforms or police uniforms?

4. Look for monuments to war veterans in your community. If the monument has the figure of a soldier, notice if the soldier's uniform is described in great detail. Do the details of the uniform tell you what war the soldier served in?

C. RITUAL FOOD SERVING VESSEL *(JING GUI)*

Materials

- Copies of the Take-Home Page.
- Copies of the interior inscription on the *Jing gui*.

Procedure

1. Ask whether any students have purchased a souvenir to commemorate a sporting event or have a bowl, platter, or mug at home that was given as an award for a special achievement or victory. Ask whether it is used at mealtime or kept for display. Does it look impressive? How and why? What material is it made of? How is it decorated? Is it inscribed?

2. Use the information on page 7 to explain that *Jing gui* was a food container made about three thousand years ago in China to honor the achievement of a young man who excelled at archery. He had the inside of the bowl inscribed with the story of his success so that his descendants would remember him. His bowl was made of bronze so that it would last for "ten thousand years."

3. Ask students to describe a special bowl or platter they have at home. Make a list of the materials they mention (ceramic, wood, glass, plastic, stainless steel, silver, brass). Discuss which of these materials is the most durable. Which is most likely to last "for ten thousand years?" Which is the most likely to break? Which is considered the most precious? Distribute the Take-Home Page and explain how they and their families can fill it out and draw an illustration.

4. After the students return to school with their Take-Home Page and illustration, ask them to write a descriptive caption about their object's appearance, material, durability, decoration, and inscription. Mount the students' illustrations and captions on a bulletin board.

5. Teach students to make a rubbing of an inscription on a plaque or a gravestone. After obtaining permission to make the rubbing, cover the inscription with soft paper and then rub a crayon over the paper. Be careful not to mark the actual stone or plaque with the crayon.

6. Explain that the inscription on the *Jing gui*, shown on the cover of this issue, is made of Chinese "characters" that tell of Jing's success as an archer. (Ask the students to find the character on the cover photo of this issue that looks like a bow and arrow and means "archery.") Have students work in small groups to write their own stories about the good deed of a classmate using a few word pictures of their own design. When the stories are completed, have students exchange them for editing. Discuss whether they were able to understand the word pictures.

D. ADAMS MEMORIAL

Procedure

1. Visit a cemetery in your community. Find out whether most gravemarkers have figures. Look for unusual inscriptions. Copy or make a rubbing of any inscriptions that tug at the emotions.

2. Write an inscription for the *Adams Memorial*.

STEP 2 MAKE A MEMORIAL

Objectives

- Students will apply their understanding of memorials by creating an object or planning an event in memory of a person or pet to whom they felt close.

Materials

- Each student will collect whatever materials are appropriate for the memorial he/she designs. Materials could include paper, paint, drawing materials, clay, wood, photographs, tapes, video film, notebooks, or scrapbooks.

Subjects

- Art, language arts

Procedure

1. As a class, make a list of the types of memorials students could design and build themselves. These might include the following:

A painting, drawing, or sculpture of a person/pet

A photo collage

A box of objects that bring the person/pet to mind

A story, poem, or essay about the person/pet

A play/skit about the person/pet

A song about the person/pet or a musical composition in his/her honor

A memorial plaque

A gift in the person's memory, such as a tree for the grounds or a book for the library

2. Ask each student to create an object, piece of writing, or performance in memory of a person or pet to whom he or she felt close. This person or pet could be (but needn't be) the same person or pet they thought about in Step 1.

3. Ask each student to design a dedication marker and compose a statement about the person/pet. This marker would be placed on or near the memorial object. If the memorial object is in written form (such as a story, play, or piece of music), the dedication could be included in a brochure or program.

WORKSHEET
Whom Do You Remember?

To the teacher
- Duplicate this page for students.
- Use with Lesson Plan Step 1.

Name of person or pet you would like to remember:

Relationship to you (for example, grandmother, friend, dog...):

Try to picture this person or pet in your mind and write down everything you remember: How did your person or pet look? How big was he/she? How old was he/she? What color hair? What were his/her favorite clothes?

When you picture your person/pet, what is he/she doing?

In what kind of place do you picture your person/pet?

What was your person/pet's favorite pastime? Food? Sport?

What could your person/pet do better than most other people or pets?

What would you like to do with your person/pet if he/she were still nearby?

What would you like to say to him/her if you could?

Use the back of this page or a separate sheet to draw a picture of the person or pet that you would like to remember.

TAKE-HOME PAGE

Publication of *Art to Zoo* is made possible through the generous support of the Pacific Mutual Foundation.

People often commemorate important events like weddings, a baby's birth, or winning a competition with special objects. Look at home for a bowl or platter or mug that reminds you of a person or an important occasion or time in your family's life. Fill out this chart about the object you find.

Kind of object	Circle the material it's made of.	How durable is it?	How is it decorated?	Is it inscribed?	Value
	China (ceramic) Wood Glass Plastic Silver Stainless steel Brass Other?	Would never break Might break Very breakable	Carved Painted Imprinted Engraved Plain Other?	Copy some of the lettering if it is inscribed.	Valuable Cheap

Use the back of this page or a separate sheet to make a drawing of your object from home.

TRABAJO PARA HACER EN FAMILIA

Esta publicación ha sido posible gracias al aporte generoso de la Pacific Mutual Foundation.

La gente usualmente conmemora eventos importantes como matrimonios, el nacimiento de un niño, o el triunfo en una competencia con objetos especiales. En casa, observa y encuentra una vasija, fuente, o una taza que te recuerde a una persona o evento importante o momento especial en la vida de tu familia. Luego completa este cuadro con comentarios sobre el objeto que encontraste.

Tipo de objeto	**Traza un círculo indicando el material de que está hecho.**	**¿Cuán durable es?**	**¿Cómo está decorado?**	**¿Tiene inscripciones?**	**Valor**
	Porcelana (cerámica) Madera Vidrio Plástico Plata Acero inoxidable Bronce ¿Otro?	Irrompible Podría quebrarse Altamente quebrable	Cincelado, tallado Pintado Impreso Grabado, estampado Liso ¿Otro tipo?	Copia un trozo del texto si forma parte de la inscripción.	Valioso Poco valioso, de material barato

Utiliza el reverso de esta página o una hoja adicional para dibujar el objeto que encontraste en casa.

RESOURCES

BOOKS

Asian Art in the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery: The Inaugural Gift. 1987. Thomas Lawton, Shen Fu, Glenn Lowry *et al.*, Smithsonian Institution Press.

Benin: Royal Art of Africa. Teacher packet includes slides and information on brass casting. Available on free loan from the Baltimore Museum of Art Education Department (410) 396-6320.

Earth Shine and the Wall. 1991. Peter Nancarrow. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Hiroshige's Heroes. 1980. Barbara Hecht Whitney. Museum of American Art in association with Yale University Press.

Royal Bronze Sculpture of the Collections of the National Museum of African Art. Washington, D.C., 1993. Bruce Lester. Smithsonian Institution Press.

Teacher's Packet: Artists' Silhouette Portraits. 1991. Education Department, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Transcendental Line: The Art of Kay Sage and Yves Tanguy. 1988. Judith Wilkinson. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

CREDITS

Page 5
Head of an *oba*, 18th century
Edo peoples
Benin Kingdom, Nigeria
Copper alloy
31.1 cm (12¼ in.)
Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn to the Smithsonian Institution in 1979, 85.19.16
Photograph by Jeffrey Ploskonka
National Museum of African Art

Page 6
Painting No. 17, Berlin
1914-15
by Marsden Hartley
American (1877-1943)
Oil on canvas
39 1/2" x 31 5/8 inches
Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
Smithsonian Institution
Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn
1966
HMSG 66.3.115
Photograph by Lee Stalsworth

Cover and page 7
S-1987.329: Ritual Food Serving Vessel (*Ding*), Guo China, Western Zhou rca. 1050-771 B.C.E., 10th century B.C. Bronze 15.5 x 32.1 x 23.5 cm The cover image shows detail of the inscription

Page 8
The National Museum of American Art houses a copy of the figure from the Adams Memorial, cast in bronze in 1966. In this issue of *Art to Zoo*, a photo by Jerry L. Thompson shows the original work, which was completed in 1891 and is located in Rock Creek Church Cemetery.

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